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FAMILY ECONOMICS REVIEW

Consumer and Food Economics Research Division, Agricultural Research Service,
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Prepared for home demonstration agents and home economics specialists of the Agricultural Extension Service, this publication reports current developments in family and food economics, and economic aspects of home management.

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DISINFECTANTS FOR USE IN HOME LAUNDERING

The modern homemaker is faced with an expanding array of products for use in home laundering. Most of them, according to manufacturers' claims, produce a whiter, brighter wash or impart softness to the laundered items. The products discussed in this paper are unique in that no claim is made that they improve the appearance or feel of the textiles. These products, which are beginning to appear in grocery stores, are disinfectants for use in laundering.

Clothing and household textiles, like water, food, and air can transmit pathogenic microorganisms. It has been generally assumed, however, that laundering is an effective way of killing bacteria on textiles. The following recent changes suggested this might no longer be true for home laundering: (1) In general, the wash cycle is shorter than it used to be. (2) Many washing machines have a "warm" as well as a "hot" setting. Even at the "hot" setting the average wash temperature in home laundering has been found to be only 120° F. to 130° F., which is too low to kill bacteria. (3) The use of communal laundry facilities (such as coin-operated machines) has increased markedly. Sanitary practices are not always observed in these.

As coin-operated laundry machines increased, the Clothing and Housing Research Division of the ARS received many inquiries from homemakers who were concerned about the sanitary aspects of their use. These inquiries led the Division to initiate research on the need for and effectiveness of disinfectants in home laundering.

Before undertaking an evaluation of disinfectants for use in home laundering, it was necessary to find out how long bacteria remain alive on fabrics. Small swatches of wool blanketing, muslin sheeting, and acetate tricot were inoculated with three test bacteria and placed under known conditions of temperature and humidity. At intervals swatches were examined to find out how many live bacteria remained. *Staphylococcus aureus*, a common cause of pneumonia and skin and kidney infections, remained alive on wool for 127 days, on cotton for 84 days, and on acetate tricot for 51 days. *Escherichia coli*, the common intestinal bacterium and related to paratyphoid and typhoid organisms, remained alive on wool for 67 days, on cotton for 32 days, and on acetate tricot for 7 days. *Mycobacterium butyricum*, a member of the group in which the organism causing tuberculosis belongs, remained alive for 84 days on wool, 70 days on cotton, and 34 days on acetate tricot.

As these survival times are long enough to be of epidemiological importance, the next step was to evaluate disinfectants which might be used in home laundering. Such disinfectants must meet the following specifications: (1) They must not harm the color or physical characteristics of the fabrics, (2) they must not leave a residue which would be toxic for the skin, (3) they must kill many types of bacteria, and (4) the cost must be reasonable.

Three disinfectants were found which markedly reduced the number of bacteria on inoculated swatches when used in simulated warm water laundering. They were: (1) A quaternary ammonium compound, (2) a phenolic disinfectant, and (3) the antibiotic, neomycin sulfate.

The first two of these disinfectants and a bleach containing sodium hypochlorite were evaluated under in-use conditions. Nine families brought their laundry to the laboratory for several months, where it was washed in a home-type automatic washing machine. The disinfectants were tested for effectiveness in either the wash or rinse cycle, and at both "warm" and "hot" water settings. Bacterial counts were made of untreated and treated wash and rinse waters at the end of each cycle, and of swatches of fabric attached to articles of clothing.

The number of bacteria per ounce of untreated wash water at the "hot" water setting varied for the different family washes from 2,400 to 2,520,000; of untreated rinse water from 900 to 960,000. At the "warm" water setting the number of bacteria per ounce of untreated wash water varied from 63,600 to 10,200,000; of untreated rinse water from 26,100 to 1,230,000. These data show that the homemaker cannot rely on home laundering temperatures and detergents to control transmission of bacteria by textiles and clothing.

Quaternary disinfectants consistently reduced the number of bacteria. Since this type of disinfectant is inactivated by most detergents, it should be added at the beginning of the rinse cycle. For a washing machine which uses 15 gallons of rinse water, the homemaker would add 4 ounces of the commercial disinfectant (commonly sold as a 10 percent solution). At current prices, this would cost from 6 to 10¢ per load. Examples of products available on the retail market are: CO-OP Sanitizer (Greenbelt Consumers Services, Beltsville, Maryland), available in CO-OP Supermarkets throughout the country, and by mail elsewhere; and Roccal (Sterwin Chemicals, New York, New York), available at janitors' and dairy supply houses. 1/

Phenolic disinfectants also reduced the number of bacteria. It made little difference whether they were used in the wash or rinse cycle. Approximately 1 cup per load of the household cleaners or sanitizers listed below would be needed. At current prices this would cost about 29¢ per load. Examples of available products are: Sea-Air Pine-Sol (Dumas Milner, Jackson, Mississippi), and Fast (Tidy House Products Co., Omaha, Nebraska), both available in grocery stores.

The use of 1 cup of chlorine bleach (the amount commonly recommended for bleaching) in the wash cycle at the "hot" water setting markedly reduced the number of bacteria. An obvious disadvantage is that chlorine bleaches cannot be used on all fabrics. The current cost per load would be approximately 4¢. Examples are: Clorox (Procter and Gamble, Cincinnati, Ohio) and King Bleach (Mangels-Herold Co., Baltimore, Maryland), available in grocery stores.

It is not our intent to recommend that an antibacterial agent must always be used in home laundering. However, whenever there is sickness in the home, the school, or the community, or when the sanitation of communal laundry facilities is questionable, the use of a disinfectant is desirable.

1/ Mention of companies or products does not imply recommendation or endorsement by the USDA over others not mentioned.

--Ethel McNeil and Florence H. Forziati

PAID SERVICES USED BY EMPLOYED HOMEMAKERS IN GEORGIA AND OHIO

Do homemakers delegate some of their load of household duties to paid workers when they themselves enter gainful employment? This is one of the questions the Consumer and Food Economics Research Division is seeking answers to in its studies of job-related expenditures and management practices of working wives. Some answers are available now from two urban studies--one in four Georgia cities and the other in one city in Ohio.

The women who took part in these studies reported on their use during a year of paid help for four kinds of households tasks: Laundry work, general housework, child care, and sewing. Although these aren't the only kinds of paid services used by homemakers they are probably the most common. Laundry work included washing and/or ironing done by paid workers in the home of the respondent, as well as that sent out to a laundress or commercial laundry. Child care included paid care at home and/or away, except nursing care, institutional care, and special training.

The paid services reported by individual women varied from a few hours or days to year-round service, costing from a few dollars to several hundred a year. Expenditures are used in this report as measures of the amount of service bought.

Here, in brief, are some of the findings from the Georgia and Ohio surveys:

- The employed wives used more paid services for household tasks than the nonemployed wives, both in Georgia and Ohio. The percentage of employed wives using paid help was greater, and the average amount these wives spent for help was larger. (See tables 1 and 2.)

- The women who were most likely to use paid services, and who spent the most for it were the gainfully employed wives who were mothers of preschool children.

- The Georgia wives, employed and nonemployed, used more paid service than the Ohio wives. Considerably more wives in each type of family reported help. Moreover, these wives spent more for help than their Ohio counterparts with one exception--the employed mothers of preschool children, who spent slightly less.

  In families made up entirely of adults or with older children only (6 to 17 years), even the full-time homemakers in Georgia were more likely to have some paid help than the job-holding wives in Ohio.

- Having a job increased the percentage of wives using paid help for homemaking tasks relatively more in Ohio than in Georgia. In Ohio, the proportion reporting help was about two-thirds higher for employed than nonemployed wives in two types of families, and four-fifths higher in one type. In Georgia, it was about one-fourth higher in two types of families, one-third higher in the other.

Table 1.--Families using paid services for household tasks in 1 year, by employment status of wives and family type; four Georgia cities and one Ohio city

State; kind of service	Employed wives				Nonemployed wives			
	All families	All-adult	With children 6-17 only	With children under 6	All families	All-adult	With children 6-17 only	With children under 6
Georgia								
Number of families	186	63	70	53	179	30	41	108
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Any paid services	88	83	90	92	72	63	73	73
Laundry work:								
Any	76	79	77	72	59	53	68	57
At home	44	30	47	57	23	13	22	26
Away from home	60	65	64	47	49	47	54	48
General housework	49	38	53	57	26	33	10	31
Child care:								
Any	40	--	36	92	19	--	7	29
At home	30	--	31	64	18	--	7	27
Away from home	13	--	4	40	2	--	--	4
Sewing	31	32	31	30	18	13	20	19
Ohio								
Number of families	184	65	79	40	183	21	55	107
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Any paid services	59	49	56	80	42	29	31	49
Laundry work:								
Any	40	43	38	35	22	14	20	24
At home	10	6	10	15	1	--	2	1
Away from home	29	37	28	20	21	14	18	23
General housework	21	12	22	35	5	5	7	4
Child care:								
Any	26	--	22	75	20	--	9	30
At home	19	--	16	52	19	--	9	28
Away from home	9	--	5	32	2	--	--	4
Sewing	8	12	4	10	6	10	7	5

Table 2.--Expenditures for paid services in 1 year, by employment status of wives and family type; four Georgia cities and one Ohio city

[Averages based on number of families reporting each kind of service]

State; kind of service	Employed wives				Nonemployed wives			
	All families	All-adult	With children 6-17 only	With children under 6	All families	All-adult	With children 6-17 only	With children under 6
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Georgia								
Any paid services	291	173	275	436	102	117	83	105
Household help 1/	337	188	328	459	127	140	102	129
Laundry away from home	71	91	70	38	47	47	64	39
Child care away from home ..	162	--	78	174	50	--	--	50
Sewing	16	11	22	13	7	4	6	8
Ohio								
Any paid services	252	129	194	454	66	89	57	67
Household help 1/	265	183	198	390	75	2/	64	70
Laundry away from home	78	84	75	72	42	67	36	42
Child care away from home ..	357	--	277	381	48	--	--	48
Sewing	13	14	14	10	7	9	8	5

1/ For child care, laundry work, and/or general housework.

2/ One family only, included in total but not shown separately.

- More Georgia than Ohio families used "household help" (workers who go to the employer's home to perform duties). In employed-wife families the proportions using household help were as follows:

Family type:	Percent of employed-wife families with "household help"	
	Georgia	Ohio
All-adult	43	17
With children 6 to 17 only ...	59	37
With children under 6	68	58

Women willing to hire out as household workers are more plentiful in the Georgia cities than in Ohio, and southern homemakers are more accustomed to this kind of help. Many of the employed mothers who hired a person to come to the home to care for children enjoyed the added advantage of receiving other services from the same worker. In Georgia, for example, 95 percent of the working wives who hired a worker to come in to care for children also got help with laundry or housework from this same person.

- In the employed-wife families with preschool children, 3 out of 10 in Ohio and 4 out of 10 in Georgia provided some paid care away from home for the youngsters. The families reporting child care away from home spent more than twice as much for it in Ohio as in Georgia ($381 compared with $174).

The nonemployed-wife families with preschool children made little use of away-from-home care. Only 4 percent in each State reported any, with expenditures averaging about $50.

- In general, away-from-home laundry services were used more than at-home service. In Ohio about 30 percent of the employed and 20 percent of the nonemployed wives sent some laundry out, spending an average of $78 and $42, respectively. More of the Georgia women sent laundry out (60 percent of the employed, 50 percent of the nonemployed); their expenditures were about the same as the Ohio wives (averages of $71 and $47, respectively).

- More employed wives reported paid help for laundry work than for general housework or sewing. This was true for those in each type of family, and in both States.

Expenditures for child care at home and laundry at home are not given separately, but are included in the expenditures for household help. Household workers often did more than one kind of task (child care, laundry, or general housework) while in the home, and no attempt was made to allocate their pay to the separate tasks.

The wives in the studies from which these data come were all under 55 years old, had husbands who held full-time jobs, and households of less than 7 members. The "employed" wives had gainful employment at least half time during the schedule year, and the "nonemployed" had no gainful employment. Family incomes (husband and wife combined) were all under $15,000.

--Emma G. Holmes

THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM AND ITS EFFECT ON FAMILY DIETS

The effectiveness of the Food Stamp Program in raising the food consumption and dietary levels of needy families has been studied in low-income sections of Detroit, Michigan, and rural Fayette County, Pennsylvania. These are two of the eight economically depressed areas in which the Department of Agriculture began pilot Food Stamp Programs in the early summer of 1961. The program was described in the March 1962 issue of Family Economics Review. 1/

Families in a random sample of dwelling units were interviewed and gave information relating to the quantity and cost of the food consumed in the past 7 days during two periods in 1961--at first in April-May before introduction of the Food Stamp Program and again in September-October after it was in operation a short time. The research reported here is based on a "before-and-after" comparison of the food consumption of a group of selected "matched" families that reported their food consumption in both survey periods--ones that participated in the Food Stamp Program in September-October and would have been qualified for such a program because of their low income and resources in April-May.

Effect on money value of food

In the April-May preprogram period the money value of food of participating families was lower in Detroit than in rural Fayette County, $4.90 versus $5.50 per person per week. Under the Food Stamp Program the money value of participants' food increased appreciably, by about $1.70 in Detroit and $0.50 per person per week in rural Fayette County. Thus relative positions were reversed, Detroit participants having food of a higher money value than rural Fayette County participants, about $6.60 versus $6.00 per person per week.

The increase in expense for purchased food was high in relation to the amount of food coupons (stamps) that participating families received free. The average rise in expense for food was equivalent to somewhat more than the average value of free coupons in Detroit and to somewhat less than their value in rural Fayette County.

1/ "Food Distribution Programs of the Department of Agriculture," p. 11. Family Economics Review. March 1962.

Effect on food consumption

Use of fruits and vegetables increased most between the two survey periods. Families in Detroit raised the quantity of fruits and vegetables they consumed nearly 60 percent and rural families in Fayette County more than 30 percent. Another striking change between the two periods was the 40 percent increase in use of meat, poultry, and fish by Detroit participants; however, rural Fayette County participants used only about 5 percent more of this food group.

Consumption of other groups of food was about the same or lower in the later period. In both places use of nonfat dry milk solids, a federally donated food in April-May, dropped considerably in September-October. The drop was fully balanced by increased use of fluid milk and other milk products in Detroit but not in rural Fayette County where milk (fluid equivalent) consumption decreased almost 20 percent. Total use of eggs was down 20 percent in Detroit and 30 percent in rural Fayette County, apparently due to terminated Federal donations of dried eggs and seasonally higher prices of shell eggs. An uncompensated shift in consumption from flour, cereals and meals (four such items were federally donated in April-May) to more expensive commercially baked goods, largely explains the 10 percent fall in consumption of grain products in rural Fayette County.

Effect on diet quality

Dietary levels were evaluated in terms of the percentage of each group of families that had diets meeting the allowances recommended by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council for each of eight nutrients, and then summarized in terms of the percentage of each group that had diets meeting the allowances for all eight nutrients.

In both communities in April-May an appreciable proportion of families had diets that were below the allowance for each nutrient. (See table.) The nutrients in which diets were most frequently below recommended levels were calcium and ascorbic acid with riboflavin and vitamin A value next. Levels of ascorbic acid and vitamin A were substantially higher in September-October. Levels of calcium and riboflavin were higher only in Detroit.

The dietary improvements of families were due to use of increased food purchasing power for extra amounts of foods rich in the nutrients shortest in their family diets. Higher levels of ascorbic acid and vitamin A value were the result of more fruits and vegetables in both places, and higher levels of calcium and riboflavin in Detroit were from the combined contribution made by more grain products, vegetables, and meat, poultry, fish.

In rural Fayette County it seems clear that more home produce and lower food prices, particularly for fruits and vegetables in season helped to improve diets, since diets of nonparticipants also were better in the later period. In Detroit there is no conclusive evidence that season was an important factor in dietary levels.

Appraisal of diets of matched families participating in Food Stamp Program 1/

Nutrient or food group (1)	Detroit			Rural Fayette County		
	September-October (2)	April-May (3)	Difference (4)	September-October (5)	April-May (6)	Difference (7)
Households ....no..	87	87	--	71	71	--
	Diets meeting recommended allowances of National Research Council					
All eight nutrients .pct..	48	29	19*	39	26	13
Protein ....do..	92	88	4	90	84	6
Calcium ....do..	55	41	14	52	50	2
Iron ....do..	92	90	2	88	87	0
Vitamin A value .....do..	86	74	12*	74	64	10
Thiamine ....do..	85	82	3	84	84	0
Riboflavin ....do..	84	76	8	76	77	-1
Niacin ....do..	98	94	4	90	90	0
Ascorbic acid ....do..	69	57	12	65	39	26*
	Average amount per nutrition unit per day					
Food energy ....cal..	5,360	4,400	960	4,900	4,850	50
Protein ....g..	139	114	25	117	123	-6
Calcium ....do..	0.84	0.76	0.08	0.80	0.90	-0.10
Iron ....mg..	21	17	4	18	19	-1
Vitamin A value .....I.U..	15,050	10,760	4,290	8,980	8,740	240
Thiamine ....mg..	2.84	2.37	0.47	2.56	2.92	-0.36
Riboflavin ....do..	2.87	2.55	.32	2.55	2.91	-.36
Niacin ....do..	36.4	29.4	7.0	29.2	29.0	.2
Ascorbic acid ....do..	112	83	29	116	81	35
	Average amount consumed per person per week					
Milk, cream, ice cream, cheese (fluid milk equiv.) lb..	7.44	7.36	0.08	8.23	9.96	-1.73
Meat, poultry, fish ..do..	5.60	4.13	1.47	3.31	3.14	.17
Eggs ....do..	.60	.75	-.15	.66	.95	-.29
Fruits, vegetables ...do..	11.40	7.47	3.93	12.58	9.78	2.80
Grain products (flour equiv.) ....do..	3.86	3.56	.30	4.13	4.62	-.49
Fats, oils ....do..	1.03	.86	.17	1.18	1.16	.02
Sugars, sweets ....do..	1.23	1.14	.09	1.61	1.47	.14

* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Only the percentages of diets meeting recommended allowances have been tested for significance.

1/ Matched families--Families that participated in Food Stamp Program in September-October, had economic status in April-May qualifying for such a program, and reported their food consumption in both survey periods.

Only slightly more families in Detroit (29 percent) than in rural Fayette County (26 percent) had diets that met the recommended allowances for all eight nutrients in April-May. In both places the number of families with such diets increased considerably in September-October, the percentages becoming 48 in Detroit and 39 in rural Fayette County. Thus, about two-thirds more of the participating families in Detroit and one-half more in rural Fayette County had diets meeting allowances in the Program period than previously.

In the 1955 nationwide survey of food consumption, about 50 percent of nonfarm households in the North with incomes under $4,000 had diets that met allowances for all eight nutrients. The Food Stamp Program helped needy families in Detroit in September-October 1961 to attain dietary levels about as good. The program, however, had somewhat less effect on the diets of families in rural Fayette County.

Better food selection practices rather than more food are the keys to the superior nutritional quality of family diets in Detroit compared with those in rural Fayette County, especially in September-October. On a per person basis meat, poultry, and fish was the only major group of foods consumed in greater quantity during either period in Detroit than in rural Fayette County. But the choices within groups resulted in higher consumption of such extra-rich sources of nutrients as citrus fruit, dark-leafy greens, deep-yellow vegetables, and pork by the Detroit families.

For more information on the program, a report is available from the Office of Information, ERS, USDA, Washington 25, D. C. It is Food Consumption and Dietary Level under the Pilot Food Stamp Program, Detroit, Michigan and Fayette County, Pennsylvania, AER-9.

--Sadye F. Adelson

TRENDS IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR FOOD DURING THE PAST DECADE

One piece of evidence that food is a bargain is shown by the small change in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for food during the decade between December 1951 and December 1961. The change in the food index (less than 5 percent) was considerably lower than the change of 13 percent for all commodities and services measured by the CPI during this decade.

The CPI measures changes in prices of goods and services usually bought by moderate-income city families. The food index represented 28 percent of the weight of items in the Consumer Price Index in December 1961. Food purchased in grocery stores represented about 23 percent, and food purchased in restaurants, 5 percent. The cost of food at home rose more slowly than the cost of food in restaurants.

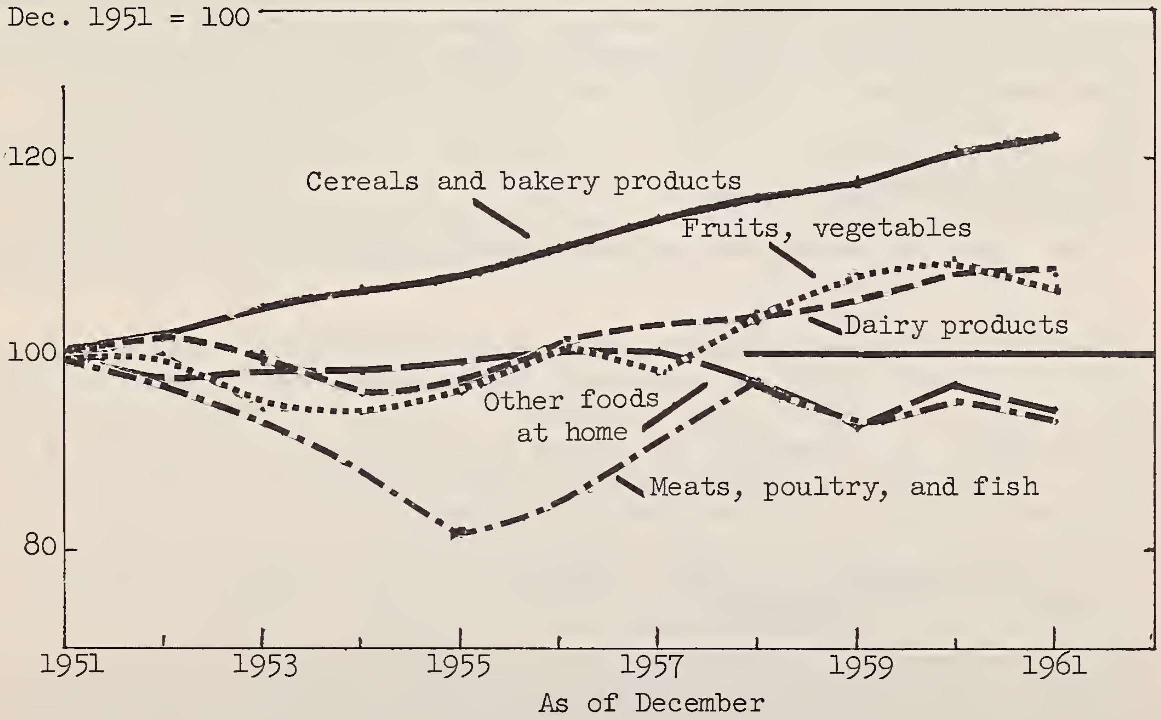
Food purchased in the grocery store cost the homemaker about 2 percent more in December 1961 than in December 1951; restaurant meals cost 23 percent more in December 1961 than in January 1953 when they were first included in the Consumer Price Index. The faster advancement of prices of restaurant meals reflects the greater relative cost of labor and services in the food service trade as compared to the retail food trade.

The food-at-home component of the index has five subgroups that show wide diversity of price trend: (1) Cereals and bakery products; (2) meats, poultry, and fish; (3) dairy products; (4) fruits and vegetables; and (5) other foods at home.

Cereals and bakery products

Prices of cereals and bakery products rose 22 percent from December 1951 to December 1961. (See chart.) The effect of higher production and manufacturing costs on this subgroup are well illustrated in the rise in price of bread. Between 1951 and 1961 the average retail price of a 1-pound loaf of bread increased from 16 to 21 cents, or about 31 percent. The cost of the bread ingredients was slightly over 3 cents in 1951 and slightly under 3 cents in 1961. The difference between the cost of the bread ingredients and the cost of the baked loaf was 45 percent higher in 1961 than in 1951. Labor costs (including fringe benefits), advertising, and promotion have been major factors in widening the gap between farm value of bread ingredients and retail price of the loaf.

PRICE CHANGES FOR FOOD GROUPS, 1951-61



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Meats, poultry, and fish

Retail costs of the meats, poultry, and fish subgroup were reduced by 7 percent during the 1951-61 interval.

At the end of 1951 beef prices were at an alltime high. From 1952 to 1955 increased marketing of cattle caused a substantial lowering of beef prices. During the same period pork prices advanced, reaching in some months of 1953 the highest levels ever recorded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. While beef prices greatly influenced the sharp decline in the index for meats, poultry, and fish between 1951-55, poultry prices were also effective in helping to maintain the low prices of the subgroup.

In December 1951, the housewife paid about 59 cents per pound for dressed and drawn poultry; in December 1961, she paid 37 cents per pound for a cut-up ready-to-cook fryer. In 1951, she stood in line while the butcher wrapped the bird; in 1961, without waiting, she picked the cellophane-wrapped bird from a refrigerated counter. Greater efficiency in production and marketing and the use of poultry as "loss leaders" in retail stores are important factors in the relatively low prices for poultry, which have contributed to the overall reduction in the prices of the subgroup in the 10-year period.

Dairy products

The index of prices for dairy products was 8 percent higher in December 1961 than December 1951. The increase dates from spring 1954 when milk prices were at a low level as a result of high production and the reduction of support prices from 90 to 75 percent of parity. Since then increased labor costs, especially in the production and manufacturing of cheese, and Government purchases have resulted in a modest rise in prices of dairy products.

Fruits and vegetables

The index for vegetables and fruits was 7 percent greater for December 1961 than for December 1951.

Potatoes and oranges are the individual items with the greatest relative importance in the fruits and vegetables index; therefore, as their prices move, so moves the index of the subgroup. In 1953, for example, potato prices declined about 35 percent and the fruits and vegetables index followed the trend. In the following years adverse weather conditions advanced potato prices until in July 1956 they reached the highest price on record--$1.16 for a 10-pound bag. Since 1956, increased potato acreage has kept potato prices low. In 1958, the Florida freeze damaged the citrus crop; immediately prices of fresh fruit and concentrated citrus fruit juice increased.

The increase between 1951 and 1961 in average prices of processed vegetables and fruits was slightly greater than the increase in the subgroup index. The major part of the overall rise may be attributed to increase in marketing costs, which rose about one-third in the last decade. However, efficiency in production, wholesale and retail marketing practices, and changes in channels of distribution have held down some of these costs.

Other foods used at home

The index for this group, which includes coffee and other beverages, fats and oils, sugar and sweets, eggs, and miscellaneous foods, was 6 percent lower in December 1961 than December 1951. While there were price fluctuations over the period due particularly to changes in prices of eggs, no distinct trend was evident.

Developments in poultry nutrition and genetics and improved management practices were reflected in increased egg production, particularly in the winter months. For example, the average number of eggs produced per 100 layers was 40 as of the first of the month in December 1951, and 54 in 1961, an increase of 35 percent. Thus, despite a decrease in the average number of layers of 10 percent from 1951 to 1961, egg production increased 6 percent.

Alltime high coffee prices in 1954 because of drought and frosts in Brazil turned the more economical customers to instant coffee, as well as to tea and other alternates. Price declines for roasted coffee followed, and increased plantings caused further price declines until by December 1958 coffee prices had fallen below the December 1951 average price of 87 cents. In 1960, mutual trade agreements on export prices and quota allocation with Latin American producing areas tended to stabilize coffee prices. Prices for canned coffee declined about 1 percent in 1960 and 4 percent in 1961, as compared with the 11 percent decline in 1959.

Sugar and sweets prices have tended to rise over the decade, showing a peak in late 1954 and again in 1958. These peaks reflected the increases in prices of chocolate bars due to an anticipated shortage of cocoa beans. A decrease in cocoa bean prices in 1955 helped stabilize the index for chocolate candy. However, granulated sugar prices began to rise in 1960 reflecting the confusion due to the cutoff of the Cuban quota for raw sugar. During 1961, increase in domestic beet sugar production helped to reverse the trend of 1960.

--Eloise Cofer and Berta Friend

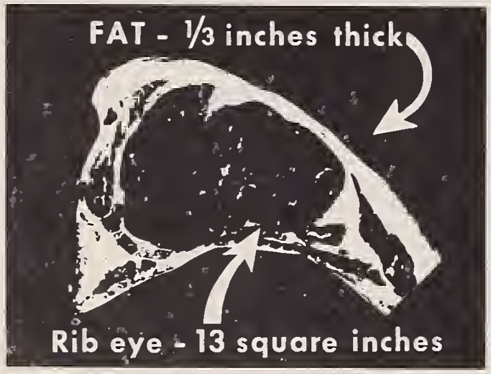
DUAL GRADING FOR BEEF GOES ON TRIAL

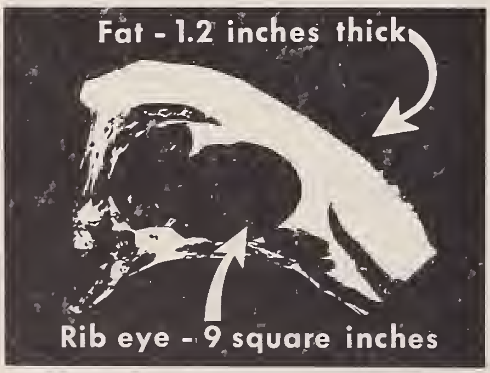
Dual grading standards for beef carcasses have been proposed by the Department of Agriculture in place of the single standard now in effect. This system of grading will be offered as a service to the meat industry on a voluntary basis beginning on July 1, 1962. The present voluntary system of grading will also remain in effect. Opportunities for comments on the proposed changes in the standards will be open to interested persons until July 1, 1963.

The new standards will provide two measures of value in beef--eating quality and yield of well-trimmed retail cuts. Quality, under the new standard as under the present standard, will be determined on the basis of marbling, color, texture, firmness, and maturity. Conformation will not be a factor in determining the quality grade under dual grading, though it is under the present system. Yield grade will be determined by the amount of fat on the outside of the carcass, the size of the rib eye muscle, the amount of kidney and other internal fat, and carcass weight.

The quality grade will be identified by the familiar terms--Prime, Choice, Good, Standard, Commercial, Utility, Cutter, and Canner. The yield grade will be designated by numbers ranging from 1 to 6, with No. 1 indicating the highest yield of boneless, closely trimmed retail cuts and No. 6 the lowest yield. Both grades will be stamped on the carcass in red (purple will still be used on carcasses graded under the present system). The quality grade will be applied in a ribbon-like strip on all major parts of the carcass, the yield grade only once on each quarter.

The photographs of two Choice grade ribs illustrate the kinds of variations that may be encountered in beef of the same quality, from carcasses of the same weight. The rib at the top had a fat covering only 1/3 inch thick and a rib eye of 13 square inches. It came from a yield grade 2 carcass. The rib below had a fat covering 1.2 inches thick and a rib eye of only 9 square inches. The carcass from which it was cut rated yield grade No. 6. Both of these carcasses weighed 700 pounds, but the yield grade 2 carcass had a value to the retailer of about $70 (10 cents a pound) more than the No. 6. At present, these carcasses--and the animals from which they come--usually sell at nearly the same price per pound.





Consumers will not be directly concerned with the yield grades--that is, they will not use them in selecting beef--because most meat is trimmed of part of the fat by retailers before the consumer sees it. But they may get more uniform quality under the dual grading system than they get under the present system. Under the present system, for instance, a carcass that is Choice grade as to quality but Standard grade as to conformation is graded Good. Under the dual grading system such a carcass will be graded Choice. Moreover, if dual grading stimulated the production of high quality, high "cutability" cattle, as it should, this may eventually result in a greater quantity of the kind of beef the consumer wants at a relatively lower price.

PURCHASING POWER OF FACTORY WAGES

Does it now require more, less, or about the same amount of working time to earn money enough to buy a pound of hamburger, a dozen eggs, or a man's wool suit than it did, say 10 years ago? With average prices as they were at the time, a worker needed about half as much time to buy the hamburger and eggs and about two-thirds as much for the man's suit in 1961 as in 1951. The working time required for production workers in manufacturing to buy these and other selected commodities used by families is shown in the table below. The estimates are based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics average retail prices for food and U.S. Department of Agriculture average prices paid by farmers for the other items. The average gross hourly wage (including overtime and before taxes) was $2.32 in 1961 compared with $1.56 in 1951.

Figures for a list of services would not be so favorable to the wage earner, however. Index prices of services, in general, were up 34 percent in the 10-year period, commodities only 7 percent. Therefore, some of the advantage gained in buying commodities is lost in buying services.

Working time required to buy selected items

Commodity	1951		1961	
	Hours	Minutes	Hours	Minutes
Hamburger ....1 pound..	--	26	--	13
Pork chops ....do....	--	31	--	23
Coffee ....do....	--	33	--	19
Milk ....1 quart..	--	8	--	6
Eggs ....1 dozen..	--	28	--	15
Man's wool suit	29	6	19	44
Man's work shoes	4	37	3	42
Woman's wool coat	20	19	14	39
Boy's overalls	1	25	1	4
Girl's cotton dress	1	55	1	44
Bituminous coal ....1 ton..	10	23	8	4
Gas range	104	29	74	21
Radio-phonograph console	130	46	72	38
Sheet, 81 by 99 inches	1	57	--	58
New car, 8-cylinder	1,166	40	1,149	26

--Lucile F. Mork

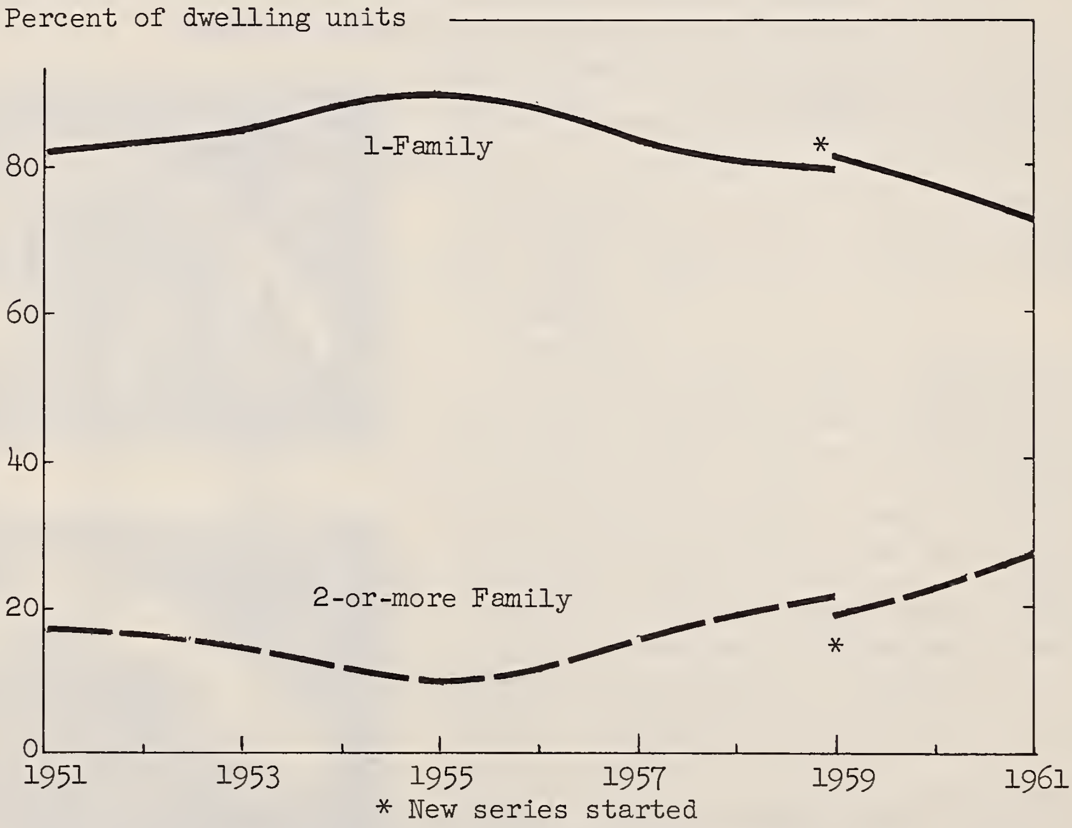
Source: U.S. Department of Labor. Employment and Earnings Statistics. BLS Bul. 1312, p. 32. 1961. Retail Prices of Food 1951 and 1952. BLS Bul. 1141, pp. 19-21. 1953. Retail Prices of Food 1961 (BLS unpublished data). U.S. Department of Agriculture. Agricultural Statistics, pp. 475-477. 1954. Agricultural Prices, pp. 38-39. January 1962. U.S. Department of Commerce. Survey of Current Business, p. S-15. March 1962.

MULTIPLE FAMILY HOUSING INCREASING

One-family houses account for a smaller proportion of the new dwelling units started in 1961 than they did in the 5 years before that. Traditionally, 1-family houses provide the largest share of new dwellings, but as the chart below shows, units in structures for two or more families (like apartment houses) are becoming relatively more numerous. In 1961, about 72 percent of the 1.4 million new units built were in 1-family houses, compared with 90 percent in 1955.

Changes were made in the data on housing starts, beginning in 1959, so the data for the last 2 years are not directly comparable with earlier years. The major changes were that farm housing was included whereas only nonfarm was before, and data from Hawaii and Alaska were added.

HOUSING STARTS, BY TYPE OF STRUCTURE



Source: U.S. Departments of Commerce and Labor.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. Construction Review. June 1960 and March 1962. U.S. Department of Labor for data prior to June 1959.

FACTS ABOUT THE U.S. SHRIMP SUPPLY

Of the many fishery resources in the United States, shrimp is probably the most valuable. In 1961 the total supply of shrimp in the United States amounted to 239 million pounds (heads-off weight). Of this amount, 104 million pounds represented the domestic catch. About 95 percent of the domestic catch was landed at South Atlantic and Gulf States ports, and 5 percent at Pacific Coast ports. Texas is the biggest shrimp-producing State.

Types of shrimp products

Shrimp is one of the most versatile of seafoods. The U.S. consumer can purchase shrimp in a variety of forms: Fresh, frozen, breaded, canned, cured, and as miscellaneous specialty items. The principal form in which shrimp now reaches the consumer is frozen, with heads off and shell on. However, frozen breaded shrimp and peeled deveined shrimp are becoming increasingly popular, canned and fresh shrimp less so. Dried, spiced, or other specialty shrimp items are prepared only in small quantities.

Since the "tail" contains the only marketable part of the shrimp, this product is generally marketed in the United States with the "heads" removed. Imported shrimp are also almost invariably received with heads off.

Shrimp are usually sold on a size basis, with the larger sizes bringing the better prices. Descriptive size classifications are in general use, and the wholesale prices are based upon the actual number of shrimp per pound, which is designated as the "count." Variations in classification exist between areas, but the following Chicago wholesale market classification is indicative of the general pattern:

Classification:	Number of shrimp per pound (heads-off)
Extra Jumbo	Less than 15
Jumbo	15-20
Large	21-25
Large-Medium	26-30
Medium	31-42
Small	43-65
Very small or bait	66 or more

Frozen shrimp, either with the shell on or off, or with the shell off and deveined, are marketed in packages up to 5 pounds in weight. Packages up to 2 pounds are generally classified as consumer size, those from 2 to 5 pounds as institutional packages. These institutional size packages are usually sold to hospitals or restaurants, but are also available in retail stores, where

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Prepared in U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Fish and Wildlife Service.

the whole package may be sold frozen or the contents thawed and sold by the pound. When supplies of fresh shrimp are not available, some processors purchase 5-pound packages of frozen shrimp; these shrimp are thawed by the processor and used to prepare frozen breaded shrimp and other processed items.

Breaded shrimp are usually marketed raw frozen, although some are cooked. These products have been widely accepted because of the ease of preparation by the housewife.

Voluntary U.S. Grade Standards are in effect for frozen raw breaded and frozen raw headless shrimp. Approximately 75 percent of the domestic production of raw breaded shrimp was federally inspected in 1961. Standards are being developed for frozen raw peeled shrimp.

Canning is a valuable sector of the shrimp industry. Because of poor landings, the 1961 pack amounted to 619,000 standard cases compared with 951,000 in 1960. Canning plants are located near the source of supply, mainly in Louisiana and Mississippi, with some in Georgia. In 1957, some Pacific Coast plants began to can shrimp. The most popular can size contains 4-1/2 or 5 ounces of cooked shelled shrimp which may or may not be deveined. Canners prefer to pack shrimp of 25 count or smaller.

The use of such products as cooked peeled shrimp, shrimp soups, shrimp cocktails, and shrimp pastes and sauces has been increasing, but the amounts prepared are as yet only a small part of the total volume of processed products. A limited demand exists in the United States for dried or cured shrimp, primarily among persons of Asian descent.

Commercially important species

In the shrimp fisheries of the United States only a few species are caught in commercially significant quantities. Three species provide the largest part of the landings in the Gulf and South Atlantic area--brown, white, and pink. A smaller shrimp, called the sea bob, is taken mainly off the Louisiana coast and represents about 1 percent of the domestic catch.

In the early days, the United States shrimp fisheries were concentrated on coastal and inshore areas. White shrimp, most abundant in these waters, were caught in the largest quantities. The heaviest landings of white shrimp are made in Louisiana. White shrimp plays a key role in the shrimp canning industry.

With the extension of the fishery to deeper inshore waters and distant areas in recent years, other species have been caught in large amounts. Brown shrimp, first taken in significant quantities in the late 1940's and now the dominant U.S. species, are landed in all States from North Carolina to Texas, with the heaviest landings in Texas. Pink shrimp did not become an important species until the 1950's. The major sources of pink shrimp landed in the United States are northwest of Key West, Florida and off the west coast of Yucatan. The west coast of Florida receives nearly all the pink shrimp caught by U.S. fishermen.

The recent expansion of the Pacific Coast shrimp fisheries has brought certain other species into a more important position. These other species accounted for almost 8 million pounds (heads-off weight) of the 1961 U.S. supply.

ESTIMATED COST OF 1 WEEK'S FOOD

The table on page 22 presents the estimated cost of 1 week's food to be prepared and served at home. The estimate is based on quantities of food in the low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal plans. The plans are available as a leaflet--Low-Cost, Moderate-Cost, and Liberal Food Plans, HHE(Adm.)-146. The cost of food for a specific family can be estimated from the table, since costs are given for individuals of different ages.

Estimated Cost of 1 Week's Food, 1/ April 1962--U.S.A. Average

Sex-age groups	Low-cost plan	Moderate-cost plan	Liberal plan
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
FAMILIES			
Family of two, 20-34 years 2/	14.00	19.00	21.60
Family of two, 55-74 years 2/	12.40	17.20	19.20
Family of four, preschool children 3/	20.80	27.80	31.70
Family of four, school children 4/	24.10	32.30	36.80
INDIVIDUALS 5/			
Children:			
Under 1 year	3.10	3.80	4.10
1-3 years	3.70	4.70	5.30
4-6 years	4.40	5.80	6.80
7-9 years	5.30	6.80	7.80
10-12 years	6.10	8.20	9.40
Girls, 13-15 years	6.50	8.70	10.00
16-19 years	6.50	8.70	9.90
Boys, 13-15 years	7.00	9.70	11.00
16-19 years	8.30	11.30	12.70
Women:			
20-34 years	5.50	7.60	8.60
35-54 years	5.30	7.40	8.40
55-74 years	5.00	6.90	7.90
75 years and over	4.90	6.50	7.40
Pregnant	6.90	8.90	9.90
Nursing	8.60	11.00	12.20
Men:			
20-34 years	7.20	9.70	11.00
35-54 years	6.70	9.10	10.20
55-74 years	6.40	8.70	9.60
75 years and over	6.10	8.30	9.20

1/ These estimates were computed from quantities in food plans published in the October 1957 issue of Family Economics Review. Quantities for children were revised January 1959 to comply with the 1958 NRC Recommended Dietary Allowances. The cost of the food plans was first estimated by using the average price per pound of each food group paid by nonfarm survey families at three selected income levels in 1955. These prices were adjusted to current levels by use of Average Retail Prices of Food in 46 Large Cities Combined released periodically by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

2/ Ten percent added for family size adjustment. For derivation of factor for adjustment, see September 1960 issue of Family Economics Review.

3/ Man and woman 20-34 years; children, 1-3 and 4-6 years.

4/ Man and woman 20-34 years; children, 7-9 and 10-12 years.

5/ The costs given are for individuals in 4-person families. For individuals in other size families, the following adjustments are suggested: 1-person--add 20 percent; 2-person--add 10 percent; 3-person--add 5 percent; 5-person--subtract 5 percent; 6-or-more-person--subtract 10 percent.

CONSUMER PRICES

Table 1.--Index of Prices Paid by Farmers for Commodities Used in Family Living
(1957-59 = 100)

May 1961; September 1961-May 1962

Item	May 1961	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 1962	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May
All commodities	102	102	102	102	102	102	103	103	103	103
Food and tobacco	--	102	--	--	102	--	--	103	--	--
Clothing	--	107	--	--	107	--	--	107	--	--
Household operation	--	103	--	--	104	--	--	105	--	--
Household furnishings	--	98	--	--	97	--	--	98	--	--
Building materials, house.	--	101	--	--	101	--	--	101	--	--
Auto and auto supplies ...	--	98	--	--	101	--	--	101	--	--

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 2.—Consumer Price Index for City Wage-Earners and Clerical-Worker Families
(1957-59 = 100)

April 1961; August 1961-April 1962

Item	Apr. 1961	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 1962	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
All items	104	104	105	105	105	104	104	105	105	105
Food	103	103	103	102	102	102	102	103	103	103
Apparel	102	102	104	104	104	104	102	102	103	103
Housing	104	104	104	104	104	104	104	105	105	105
Rent	104	104	105	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
Gas and electricity	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
Solid fuels and fuel oil	103	100	101	102	102	103	104	104	104	102
Housefurnishings	100	99	100	100	99	99	99	99	100	99
Household operation	106	106	106	106	106	106	106	107	107	107
Transportation	104	106	106	107	107	106	106	106	106	107
Medical care	111	112	112	112	112	112	113	113	114	114
Personal care	104	105	105	105	105	105	106	106	106	106
Reading and recreation ...	107	107	108	108	108	108	108	109	109	109
Other goods and services .	104	105	105	105	105	105	105	105	105	105

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Growth Through Agricultural Progress